

SOURCES OF LOVE AND HATE

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In the social data reviewed there were a few clear instances of another fundamental mechanism : that of *displacement*. Displacement has many forms. In its essence it is the shifting of psychic accent, meaning or value, from the object or the organ to which it really belongs, to another for the moment less disturbing. If, e.g., one is angry with a certain person, but too frightened of him to dare to express such anger, one may turn that feeling on to another and innocent person. Or, if the impulses belonging to one part or organ of the body raise too much anxiety to allow real expression, they may find discharge through the activity of another part or organ, as we shall see in dealing with the sexual material.

This mechanism, too, is part of the normal mode of mental development. It makes possible the normal widening of the child's interests and activities from his primary wishes towards his parents out to a circle of other children and adults in the home and the school or in later social life ; and finally to abstract entities, such as moral ideals. It serves to lessen the intensity of instinctual tension by diffusion, and thus to widen the scope of the emotional life. I have shown its working in discussing some of the material under SOCIAL RELATIONS.

A special type of displacement in which, however, repression also plays an essential part, is that described by the now familiar term *sublimation*. In the process of sublimation, the original primitive wishes and phantasies undergo not only a wide and varied displacement from their original objects, but a profound change in another respect, namely that the original sensuous aim of the activity in question becomes entirely repressed, and the activity thus

desexualised. The activity itself, however, remains free to operate in the real world, towards aims that are socialised in character, and compatible with the ego development of the individual, on the one hand, and with the standards of social life on the other. Most of our adult pursuits in art and science and economic activities provide instances of sublimation. Sublimation is the most satisfactory mechanism for dealing with repressed sexual trends, since it leaves the energy belonging to these trends available for social and personal achievement. Mere repression impoverishes the personal life; sublimation fulfils and enriches it.